

The Alameda Urban Village



Overall Workshop Summary:

With an attendance of over 45 community members, the Alameda urban village workshop attracted a broad spectrum of participants. Interested parties included property owners, business owners, members of the Shasta-Hanchett Neighborhood Association and interested community members. Also attending were community members and property owners from other identified urban villages, such as West San Carlos and South Bascom, who were present to get an understanding of the process prior to other scheduled community workshops. The workshop was held at the Westminster Presbyterian Church on 1100 Shasta Avenue at 6:30pm on the 18th of October. Present were District 6 Councilor Pierre-Luigi Oliverio, Planning Commission Member Dori Yob, and 9 city staff.

Overall, workshop participants were very interested in the potential for new development, improvements and general growth in the Alameda urban village. The majority of participants was positive in their outlook for the future of the Alameda. Participants were also generally positive towards the urban village planning process and the Lego visioning exercise. Many community members stated that the boundaries of the Alameda Urban Village should be expanded to reflect the extent of the Neighborhood Business District and include the portion of the Alameda adjacent to Stockton Avenue as well as the portion of the Alameda northwest of Julian Street. Community members expressed a desire for new investments into the Alameda with an emphasis on neighborhood serving business such as restaurants, cafes and an emphasis on local businesses. Overall workshop participants expressed interest in creating a less car oriented and more bicycle and pedestrian oriented corridor on the Alameda.

Development of significant height was stated as a concern and there was a majority agreement that any new developments above 5 or 6 stories would be too imposing upon the adjacent single family homes. Participants said that a buffer zone should be provided between new multi-story development and the adjacent single family homes. Require of a buffer between any new developments on the Alameda corridor should take the form of surface parking or a similar use. In terms of urban design, community members felt that new developments should maintain a contiguous and consistent aesthetic along the main Alameda corridor with a focus on businesses that utilize the wide sidewalks and incoming capital improvements as per the Alameda, The Beautiful Way grants. Participants expressed a desire for the incoming developments to be

designed similar to the existing character of historic buildings along The Alameda. Many workshop participants created mixed use buildings that consisted of retail on the first floor, offices and commercial space above, and a certain amount of multi-family residential on the uppermost floors. Participants stated a desire for architecturally unique buildings and were less inclined towards preservation over new developments. Workshop participants were eager to propose increases in the amount of future park space. Many work groups identified certain properties and areas within the Alameda that would be suitable sites for public space. Participants were willing to go beyond the tradition suburban park by creating unique public spaces on top of underground parking and parking structures. Community members commented on the lack of parks and public spaces in Alameda and San Jose in general and wanted an integration of investment in new development and public spaces. Participants demonstrated an acceptance of a more urban parking ratio and often reduced the amount of parking on potential new developments.

Table 1

1. Identified Assets

- ❖ Existing neighborhood feel and character.
- ❖ All local neighborhood serving businesses.

2. Identified Opportunities

- ❖ Density should be mostly on the north side.
- ❖ Southside should be less dense to integrate with existing residential.
- ❖ Intensification of uses on the Alameda north west of Race St.
- ❖ The extension of the urban village boundaries to include up to three blocks past West Julian St.
- ❖ Additional boundary extension would be to include part of Race St.
- ❖ Replace the Pink Flamingo property with a park or public plaza.

3. Other Comments and Inputs

Urban Design:

- ❖ Would like to see retail at ground level lining the Alameda.

Parks & Parking:

- ❖ Parking garages in the rear of parcels like in Los Gatos.
- ❖ Parks need to be publically accessible.

Infill Development:

- ❖ Relatively tall new developments should be focused on the north side of the Alameda. New development on the south side should be set back from the adjacent single family homes.
- ❖ Would like to see retail at ground level lining the Alameda.

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Table 1 participants were consistent in their placement of Lego with a concentration of residential density and new developments in general on the northern blocks and properties of the Alameda.

- ❖ Lots of discussion regarding the potential heights of new developments. Participants felt heights as far high as 5 to 6 stories was acceptable.
- ❖ Many of the existing neighborhood parks were located on existing properties that participants felt were not essential to the overall growth of the neighborhood.
- ❖ Proposed parks were not limited to large traditional parks but also plazas, open spaces and public gathering areas.
- ❖ The building heights did not exceed 4 stories in areas adjacent to single family homes and participants were eager to extend development to include the North Western portion of the Alameda. Development went as far northwest as the intersection of Hester Avenue and The Alameda.
- ❖ Retail developments should also be extended down Race Street.
- ❖ Underground parking on larger developments was considered preferable to at grade parking.



Growth Strategy

Table 1 participants agreed upon a growth strategy that promoted the densification of the northern portion of the Alameda urban village. Due to the larger lot sizes and deeper parcels, participants felt that development would fit best there. Participants were eager to see an increase in the amount of commercial space – such as restaurants and retail – in addition to the development of parcels that sit empty or are underutilized. Street front parcels further along The Alameda that are originally outside the boundaries were seen as potential areas for extending additional commercial frontages. Some identified properties and existing structures that did not conform to the pedestrian oriented characteristics desired by participants were identified as future opportunities. There was a general consensus within this group that The Alameda would benefit from a higher amount of retail and restaurant development over the creation of additional office space. Development should also be cognizant of the existing single

family homes and be built in such a way that there will be a buffer between the new developments and the housing.

Table 2

1. Identified Assets

- ❖ Iconic Race/Alameda intersection
- ❖ Flamingo Hotel Sign
- ❖ Variety of architecture (on The Alameda)
- ❖ Grittiness
- ❖ Arts and art related businesses; community members consider these hidden gems.

2. Identified Opportunities

- ❖ The heart of the Alameda at Race & The Alameda (intersection).
- ❖ Ground floor retail mixed use.
- ❖ Studio & housing/ Arts Hub/ Mixed use innovation for creatives (places for artists to live and work). Building upon the existing arts community.
- ❖ The portion of the block on the south side of Julian between Keeble & Morrison should have housing and open space/park/gathering space.
- ❖ Remove existing motels and replace with 3 or 4 story residential/retail mixed use.
- ❖ Locate potentially taller buildings on the West end and East end of The Alameda.
- ❖ Locate a park/plaza at Martin/The Alameda
- ❖ Locate residential and retail mixed adjacent to the (incoming) Whole Foods.

3. Other Comments and Input.

Identified Demand:

- ❖ More restaurant and dining opportunities.
- ❖ Participants do not want chain stores or chain restaurants.
- ❖ More entertainment opportunities in the neighborhood.

Urban Design:

- ❖ Participants expressed desire for contiguous ground floor commercial space along The Alameda.
- ❖ Smaller retail spaces.
- ❖ Incorporate setbacks for taller buildings (as a buffer) adjacent to single family homes.

Parks:

- ❖ Develop new park space on properties and parcels identified as underutilized.
- ❖ Development a small dog park.

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Table 2 participants focused on the development of office and retail space along The Alameda.

- ❖ Participants did not envision tall buildings and kept new development to 4 stories in height or less.
- ❖ There was an even distribution of residential development on both the north and south edges of the urban village.
- ❖ There was a concentration of office and retail at the intersection of Race St. and The Alameda.
- ❖ Parks were placed both inside and outside of the Urban Village boundary on parcels that were perceived to be underutilized. Properties such as the existing motel lots were identified as underutilized.
- ❖ The boundaries of the Lego exercise were extended to include a larger portion of The Alameda past Race Street to the Northwest of Julian Street.



Growth Strategy

The participants identified a desire for continuous row of restaurants and entertainment uses along The Alameda. Preferably these uses should be on the ground floor of mixed-use development. The participants of table 2 were in favor of new development with a consensus on having more neighborhood serving businesses. Participants identified heights of up to 4 stories being ideal for their vision of the Alameda. Taller buildings were considered acceptable at the West and East ends of the Alameda urban village. The group also stated that setbacks should be established from any adjacent single family homes near to the Alameda.

Table 3

1. Identified Assets
 - ❖ Retain local businesses such as: Schurra's, Dolce Velo Bike Shop, Freebirds, Greenlea's Bakery, and Black & Brown
2. Identified Opportunities
 - ❖ Locate office uses further along the western portion of the Alameda to draw people from Diridon Station into the urban village.
 - ❖ Establish opportunities for new parking facilities for HP customers within or adjacent to the Urban Village as a means to draw HP sporting or other event customers into The Alameda.
 - ❖ Flamingo Motel property is a key infill development opportunity.
 - ❖ Create a park at Race/Alameda as a central gathering location.

3. Other Comments and Input:

Economic:

- ❖ More retail along the Alameda.

Urban Design:

- ❖ There was agreement among participants that the height of new development should be limited to 3 stories along The Alameda.

Parks:

- ❖ Participants felt that more parks are needed in the area generally.
- ❖ Expressed worry about how that would affect existing trees if they would be removed due to new developments.

Parking:

- ❖ A preference for underground parking facilities was expressed with an understanding that the high ground water table would likely limit underground parking to one level below grade.

Community Outreach:

- ❖ Coordinate the boundaries of the Urban Village with the boundaries of The Alameda BID (business Improvement District)

Transportation:

- ❖ BRT on the Alameda, will it handle density in the interim? Participants were unsure if there would be enough available public transit to handle potential future demand.

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Participants were focused on creating up to 3 story developments that focused on mixed use.
- ❖ There was a general desire for more retail uses on the Alameda with the addition of office developments in order to spur attraction and support local businesses.
- ❖ Most buildings made were no higher than 3 stories and feature ground floor retail and two floors of office on top.
- ❖ Parks were interspersed with a concentration at the intersection of Race St. and The Alameda.
- ❖ Higher density residential was focused on Race St and featured a step design so as not to overwhelm single family homes.
- ❖ Parking garages as well as underground parking were placed off of The Alameda, behind active pedestrian oriented uses.
- ❖ There was an even distribution of retail all along the main thoroughfare of the Alameda.



Growth Strategy

Table 3 participants focused on a growth strategy that created nodes and centralized areas designed to attract people into the neighborhood. The participants felt an increase in the intensity of retail and office uses would spur more of a destination feel for the Alameda urban village. The participants utilized a contiguous retail and mixed use frontage along The Alameda with a mixture of parking garages, underground parking and parks/public space interspersed in between. Race St. and The Alameda was a focused intersection that participants placed major public spaces and parks designed as anchors. Buildings were no higher than 3 stories and featured a stepped design. Parks were also placed in between proposed growth with above grade parking placed behind as a buffer between the taller buildings and existing single family homes.

Table 4

1. Identified Assets

- ❖ The Enterprise office building was identified as an asset due to its design and architecture.
- ❖ The façade of the Black and Brown store frontage.
- ❖ Both present and previous building used by Schurra's.
- ❖ Preservation of all historic facades on the Alameda.
- ❖ The Babe's muffler statue.

2. Identified Opportunities

- ❖ Opportunity on the Flamingo Motel site for a signature hotel tower up to 9 stories over underground parking.
- ❖ Existing U Haul property is an opportunity for infill development.
- ❖ The Payday Lending property at the Alameda and Cleaves Ave. could be redeveloped.

- ❖ Babe's muffler property
- ❖ The northern portion of the Race St and The Alameda intersection.
- ❖ A property on Morrison Ave between The Alameda and West Julian St. would be a good location for an office, up to 3 stories, over underground parking.
- ❖ An existing property on North Keeble Ave between the Alameda and West Julian St. could be transformed into a community center.

3. Other Comments and Input

Urban Design:

- ❖ Buildings could be 4 -6 stories or taller on the North side (of the Alameda).
- ❖ Establish one tall signature building or more.
- ❖ 120' in height is too tall.
- ❖ Little to no on street parking.
- ❖ Outdoor dining on front sidewalks.
- ❖ Maintain Street trees and add more street lights.
- ❖ Less intense concentration of beauty and nail salon land uses in historic buildings.

Parking:

- ❖ Needs more bike parking.
- ❖ Parking garages set back off of The Alameda.

Preservation:

- ❖ Save all historic facades on The Alameda.
- ❖ Encourage the maintenance of historic buildings.
- ❖ Preserve the Babe's muffler statue.

Accessibility:

- ❖ Create wide sidewalks – create a walkable street environment.
- ❖ Establish restaurants and other amenities that are accessible without driving.
- ❖ Provided improved access to public transit.

Parks

- ❖ Participants were willing to try different types of parks including roof gardens and other publicly accessible private spaces not at the ground level.

Building Use

- ❖ The flamingo hotel was a concern based on the perceived nuisance of the current operation

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Retail was placed along the first floors of buildings on The Alameda.
- ❖ Participants placed a number of Legos onto the intersection of Race St. and The Alameda to represents a hotel/residential tower.
- ❖ Six story mixed use buildings were placed along the frontages of the Alameda with parking garages located in the back away from the street.
- ❖ Participants placed the Legos in such a way as to promote non-car related modes of transportation. This was done by locating buildings as close to property lines along street frontages as well as located parking to the rear and below of properties.
- ❖ Parks were placed in parcels set back from the frontages of The Alameda.
- ❖ Participants did not fully agree on an upper height limit or a limit on the number of towers. There was a general consensus that there should be one iconic tower for the Alameda.

- ❖ Participants were willing to forgo parking in order to keep building mass less tall and bulky.



Growth Strategy

Table 4 participants were eager to create an iconic draw for the Alameda through the development of a signature development such as a hotel or residential tower. All mixed used buildings featured a similar style with the preservation of historic styled facades along The Alameda with ground floor retail and a mix of office and residential uses above. The mixed use buildings were to be no higher than 6 stories with a step down feature to the rear so as to create a tunnel effect on the single family homes. Participants also included a strategy to include wider side walks to promote outdoor dining and more pedestrian oriented businesses as well as the inclusion of bike parking and bike oriented elements. Parking garages were proposed to be located on the north side of The Alameda (?) but to create a more pedestrian oriented environment the garages were set back from the street with active uses (i.e. store fronts) fronting The Alameda. There was an interest preserving the historic buildings through adaptive reuse. Participants would like to walk to more neighborhood services, and were willing to add residents as well as commercial uses if this increased density would support the viability of new neighborhood serving commercial uses.

Table 5

1. Identified Assets
 - ❖ Existing arts and studio space next to the Flamingo Motel.
 - ❖ Babe's muffler statue
 - ❖ Historic buildings such as the Watergarden, The Usuals, Black and Brown, 998 The Alameda, old and new Schurra's building.
 - ❖ CVS pharmacy was identified as neighborhood serving.
 - ❖ Freebirds property and building.
 - ❖ Plant 51 leasing office on the eastern portion of The Alameda.
 - ❖ All historic buildings along The Alameda are assets including buildings with mid-century architecture.

2. Identified Opportunities

- ❖ Flamingo Motel property is an opportunity for the development of a 7 story office building,
- ❖ Redevelop of payday lending property into a 2 story mixed use residential building.
- ❖ Locate future BRT stop at the intersection of Race St and The Alameda.
- ❖ Retrofit the existing storage and warehouse building on the Uhaul property into a 2 story building.
- ❖ Develop a 2 story mixed use building at the location of Babe's Muffler.
- ❖ Locate parking garage located to the rear of The Lofts on the Alameda at North Morrison Ave and The Alameda.
- ❖ The northern corner of Race St and The Alameda is an opportunity for the development of a 6 story mixed use office building with a park on top.
- ❖ A new park should be incorporated together with parking at the existing parking lot property at the southeast corner of Race St and The Alameda.
- ❖ Develop additional parks on W. Julian.
- ❖ Develop 5 story offices on the northern boundaries of the Alameda urban village on the corner of Julian and The Alameda.
- ❖ Intensify development along Race St with a 7 story office, 2 story parking garage and mixed use retail.

3. Other Comments and Input

Village Boundaries:

- ❖ The boundaries of the urban village should expand all the way east to the existing railroad tracks.

Development Standards:

- ❖ Allow higher heights on the north side of the Alameda except at the intersection of Race St. and The Alameda. Higher heights should be made available along race south of Race St and The Alameda intersection.
- ❖ All residential development should have underground parking.
- ❖ Develop a Skybridge across The Alameda connecting higher buildings and the Sky parks.

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Participants of table 5 were active in creating nodes of above 5 stories at certain key portions within the urban village. The nodes were located at major intersections or gateways into the Urban Village. A major identified node was at Race Street and The Alameda. Another was Julian, race and Keeble.
- ❖ Less development was placed on the eastern portion of The Alameda.
- ❖ Parking garages were spread on various properties going as high as 2 stories.
- ❖ Participants created a varied streetscape with a variety of heights and building styles and types.



Growth Strategy

Table 5 participants developed a growth strategy where development increased and intensified in an East to West direction along The Alameda. Building size, density and uses intensified further west along The Alameda with a slight decrease after the Race St and The Alameda intersection. Parking garages were a prominent use but placed in the rear portions of many properties away from the main Alameda corridor. Race St and The Alameda was a very dense intersection with towers and mixed used retail and office buildings. Intensifying this intersection was done under the assumption that there would be a BRT station in close proximity. Retail was proposed as the main ground floor land use along the main corridor of the Alameda. Parks were interspersed throughout the Urban Village with a number of areas showing a mixture of parking and park land uses. Table 5 participants were eager to include creative pedestrian accessibility developments (with sky bridges connecting roof top parks and public spaces all throughout the Alameda).

Table 6

1. Identified Assets
 - ❖ The existing buildings having interesting architecture.
 - ❖ Recycled Books and The Alameda Art Works.
 - ❖ Security (where there is "life" or people on the street)
 - ❖ The area is walkable, having large shade trees, wide sidewalks, and shops/services
 - ❖ Old Victorian homes (Shasta Hanchett)
 - ❖ Clock tower over Pasta Pomodoro
 - ❖ Community center/meeting place
 - ❖ Sense of neighborhood
 - ❖ Few parking lots located next to sidewalks.

2. Identified Opportunities

- ❖ Payday lending property is a redevelopment opportunity.
- ❖ Low rate motel properties in the area are redevelopment opportunities.
- ❖ The area could use a specialty stores like an eye glass shop
- ❖ Boutique stores are needed

3. Other Comments and Input

Parks and Parking

- ❖ Develop roof top parks
- ❖ Develop an urban plaza as a park

Infrastructure

- ❖ Add more bike lanes
- ❖ Create more flexible parking regulations. Specifically with the changing street parking regulations and allowing different kinds of parking systems.

Urban Design

- ❖ Do not want the Alameda to have the traffic bottle neck that occurs on streets like University Ave in Palo Alto
- ❖ Would like the Alameda to be similar to Burlingame downtown in terms of retail stores and services. Yoga studio, brand name stores: Ann Taylor, J crew, different ethnic restaurants.
- ❖ For certain existing buildings, table participants wanted to have restaurants or offices to be built on higher floors as a possible future mix use option. The buildings could use existing second floor space or develop additions.
- ❖ High density development is acceptable as long as it is done well.
- ❖ Taller portions of building should be set back from the street.
- ❖ Locate shops in front, parking in the back.

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Table 6 participants focused on placing Lego's up to 3 stories high along the main corridor of The Alameda.
- ❖ A four story parking garage was placed just south of the intersection of Race St and The Alameda.
- ❖ Residential towers and office towers up to 6 stories high were placed on the northern portion of the urban village on Julian Street going west until a short distance to the Intersection of Race Street and The Alameda..
- ❖ Red or retail Legos were used as a ground floor all along the Alameda.
- ❖ Parking garages were used liberally and parks were integrated on roofs, sky pedestrian bridges and on certain properties.
- ❖ Residential and Office Legos were used interchangeably along the village boundaries representing mixed used buildings.



Growth Strategy

Table 6 participants focused on a similar strategy as seen in other tables. Denser and taller development was envisioned along the northern boundaries of the Alameda urban village with a focus on ground floor retail fronting along The Alameda.. Participants recommended parks and public spaces on specific properties and included roof top parks and public spaces into the growth strategy. One park was placed on an existing private parking lot at Race St. and the Alameda. The Flamingo Hotel property was also suggested as a possible parks/public space development opportunity. A larger public space or park was located further North West along the Alameda on a parking lot on Hanchett Ave. The southern portion of the urban village were kept to 3-4 stories in height. The mixed use buildings planned by the participants were a mix of residential office uses on the upper floors of buildings all along the Alameda. Parking garages were placed at prominent intersections or locations within the neighborhood and were placed away from the main thoroughfares. The majority of development was focused on the Northern portions of the Alameda Urban Village with large parking garages envisioned on properties set back from the Alameda. behind it.

Table 7

1. Identified Assets
 - ❖ Historic buildings
 - ❖ J. Lohr Winery on Lenzen Avenue
 - ❖ Miracle Autobody

2. Identified Opportunities
 - ❖ Santana row mixed use style developments on the Alameda.
 - ❖ Create a retail oriented streets
 - ❖ Create more outdoor cafes
 - ❖ Create a space for aFarmer's Markets
 - ❖ Incorporate more Public Art in the neighborhood.
 - ❖ North side street could include taller more intense/dense mixed use development– make the new development in this area a focal point.

- ❖ Include green roofs use on the top of mixed use buildings (on the northside only) and develop private open space or rooftops.

3. Other Comments and Input

Desired Businesses

- ❖ Hardware store
- ❖ Farmer's Markets
- ❖ Fitness Center/Yoga
- ❖ Toy & Game Shops
- ❖ Apple Store
- ❖ Breakfast Places

Desired Infrastructure and Amenities

- ❖ Bike Parking
- ❖ Public Art

Desired Parks Facilities

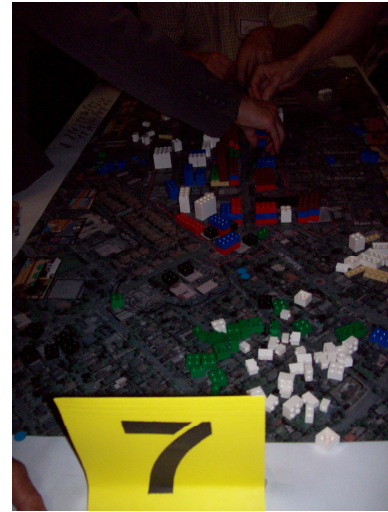
- ❖ Park on top of parking
- ❖ Dog Parks
- ❖ Skate Parks
- ❖ Parking Underground

Boundaries

- ❖ Extended boundaries to the rest of Diridon + down the Alameda. The boundaries along the eastern portion should include parcels and properties such as the whole foods site and properties further west on the Alameda.

4. Summary of Lego Exercise

- ❖ Table 7 participants focused on utilizing black Legos for preserving buildings and properties within the village boundaries.
- ❖ The number of preserved properties also extended beyond the boundaries of the urban village.
- ❖ Parking garages were used and set back with heights and massing similar to that found in Santana Row.
- ❖ Participants used a variation of retail and office Legos for mixed use buildings showing an eagerness to explore unique iterations of mixed use buildings. For example, first floor retail, second floor office and third floor retail again.
- ❖ The density of Legos and development was similar on both the North and South sides of The Alameda with more residential and office lego blocks placed on the northern borders of the urban village.



Growth Strategy

Table 7 participants were very open to development using a very creative mix of multiuse buildings. They utilized ground floor retail with a mix of office and retail above at no higher than 3 stories along The Alameda. Parking garages were used and located to the rear of properties or behind offices and other mixed use buildings. Participants were eager for new infill development and an increase in the number of community or neighborhood serving businesses. Residential uses were placed on the top floors of many mixed use buildings and were a major part of their growth strategy. Table 7 participants emphasized unique mixed use growth in the Alameda which was a featured development strategy. Table 7 participants also did not want large towers developed along The Alameda and envisioned heights and massings similar to that found in developments such as Santana Row.